

Excluded: Procedure not routinely funded

**Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, West Essex and Milton Keynes
Priorities Forum statement - adapted for Bedfordshire CCG**

Number	92
Subject	Cosmetic surgical procedures for scar revision or refashioning
Date of decision	May 2018
Date of review	May 2021

GUIDANCE

Scar revision or refashioning is not routinely commissioned or funded, except for adults and children who have:

- (a) Scars that interfere with function - for example, severe post-surgical scars or those following burns or trauma (i.e. not cosmetic); OR
- (b) Serious scarring of the face;

All requests for funding will need to be supported by photographic evidence

Background

A scar is a mark that is left on the skin, after a wound or an injury to the surface of the skin has healed. Scarring on the skin is a natural process that can occur after a cut or injury, for example after a surgical procedure or burns. Scars form when collagen accumulates around the site of the wound or injury to heal the site. Scars are permanent but can fade over the proceeding 2 years. Treatment such as surgical revision or refashioning can be performed to minimise the appearance of the scars.

Types of Scars

- Flat, pale scars
This is the most common type, which after the initial appearance of red, dark and raised, eventually becomes flatter and paler as the skin heals. They are not painful but can be itchy. If a wound is large or has edges that do not come together neatly, the healing time will be longer and the appearance will be less neat. A person who has darker skin may find the scar more obvious as the colour of the scar may stay pale in contrast to the darker skin.
- Keloid scars
These scars form when there is too much collagen at the wound site. The scar can continue to increase in size so that they can become raised and much larger than the original wound.

Keloid scars can be itchy and cause discomfort.

- Hypertrophic scars

Hypertrophic scars also form when there is too much collagen at a wound site, but in contrast to keloid scars they do not grow beyond the original size of the wound. They are usually red and raised from the skin, but become flatter and paler over time. These can last for many years. These can also reduce movement.

- Pitted or sunken scars (atrophic or “ice pick” scars)

These have the appearance of being “pitted or sunken”, and can be due to skin conditions arising from acne, chicken pox or injury.

- Scar contractures

These form when the skin contracts, which can limit the movement in that area. They can be due to burns.

Alternative treatments for scars, to help improve the appearance of the scar and skin include:

- pressure dressings
- corticosteroid injections

References

- NHS Choices, “Scars” (2015) [Online]. Available: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/scars/treatment/> [Accessed: 30 April 2017]
- NHS Choices, “Scar-Types” (2014) [Online]. Available: <https://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Scars/pages/Symptoms.aspx> [Accessed: 14 Aug 2017]
- Gold, M. H. et al (2014) Updated International Clinical Recommendations on Scar Management: Part 1 – Evaluating the Evidence *Dermatologic Surg.*, vol. 40, pp 817-824
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/264433624_Updated_International_Clinical_Recommendations_on_Scar_Management_Part_1-Evaluating_the_Evidence
- Gold, M. H. et al (2014) Updated International Clinical Recommendations on Scar Management: Part 2 – Algorithms for Scar prevention and Treatment *Dermatologic Surg.*, vol. 40, pp 825-831
https://dermaflage.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Gold-Scar_International_Clinical_Recommendations_on.2.pdf

Human Rights and Equalities Legislation has been considered in the formation of this policy